

REMARKS

Claims 2-10 are pending in the application. Claims 2-4 have been cancelled, and Claims 5-9 have been amended, leaving Claims 5-10 for consideration upon entry of the present Amendment.

More particularly, Claims 2-4 have been cancelled in an effort to expedite allowance of the application. These claims have been cancelled without prejudice to Applicants' rights thereto, including Applicants' right to file a continuation application based thereon.

Claims 5-9 each have been rewritten as an independent claim comprising all of the limitations from Claim 4, and as such are allowable.

Reconsideration and allowance of the entire case is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

Claims 5-10 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As noted above, Claims 5-9 each have been rewritten as an independent claim comprising all of the limitations from Claim 4. Accordingly, independent Claims 5-9 are each allowable. Moreover, as a dependent claim from an allowable independent claim, Claim 10 is, by definition, also allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection and allowance of the entire case.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 2-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,377,249 to Mumford.

This rejection is moot, as Claims 2-3 have been cancelled.

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Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,377,249 to Mumford in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,745,085 to Tomio et al.

This rejection is moot, as Claim 4 has been cancelled.

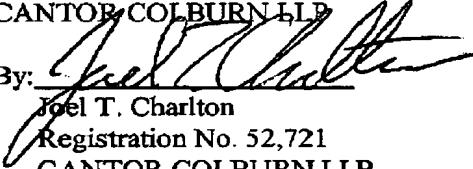
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is cordially requested to telephone the undersigned.

In the event the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks deems additional fees to be due in connection with this application, Applicants' attorney hereby authorizes that such fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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